



COVID-19

COVID-19 Testing Overview

Updated Oct. 27, 2021

Print

Find out who should get tested. Protect yourself and others. Wear a mask, stay at least 6 feet from others, avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces, and wash your hands often.

Types of tests

COVID-19 tests are available that can test for current infection or past infection.

- A viral test tells you if you have a current infection. Two types of viral tests can be used: nucleic acid amplification tests (NAATs) and antigen tests.
- An antibody test (also known as a serology test) might tell you if you had a past infection. Antibody tests should not be used to diagnose a current infection.



Coronavirus Self-Checker

A tool to help you make decisions on when to seek testing and medical care.



About the Tool

Who should get tested for current infection

- People who have symptoms of COVID-19.
- People who have come into close contact with someone with COVID-19 should be tested to check for infection:
 - Fully vaccinated people should be tested 5–7 days after their last exposure.
 - People who are not fully vaccinated should get tested immediately when they find out they are a close contact. If their test result is negative, they should get tested again 5–7 days after their last exposure or immediately if symptoms develop.
- Unvaccinated people who have taken part in activities that put them at higher risk for COVID-19 because they cannot physically distance as needed to avoid exposure, such as travel, attending large social or mass gatherings, or being in crowded or poorly-ventilated indoor settings.
- People who have been asked or referred to get tested by their healthcare provider, or state, tribal, local 🖸 , or territorial health department.

CDC recommends that anyone with any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 get tested, regardless of vaccination status or prior infection. If you get tested because you have symptoms or were potentially exposed to the virus, you should stay away from others pending test results and follow the advice of your health care provider or a public health professional.

When you are fully vaccinated and traveling internationally

International travelers need to pay close attention to the situation at their international destinations before traveling due to the spread of new variants and because the burden of COVID-19 varies globally.

- Fully vaccinated travelers do not need to get tested before leaving the United States unless required by their destination.
- Fully vaccinated air travelers coming to the United States from abroad, including U.S. citizens, are still required to have a
 negative SARS-CoV-2 viral test result or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 before they board a flight to the
 United States.
- International travelers arriving in the United States are still recommended to get a SARS-CoV-2 viral test 3-5 days after travel regardless of vaccination status.
- Fully vaccinated travelers do not need to self-quarantine in the United States following international travel.
- For more information, see International Travel During COVID-19.

How to get tested for current COVID-19 infection

• Contact your healthcare provider or visit your state, tribal, local \(\sigma\), and territorial health department's website to find the latest local information on testing. The type of viral COVID-19 tests offered may differ by location.

You and your healthcare provider might also consider either an at-home collection kit or an at-home test if you have signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and if you can't get tested by a healthcare provider or public health official.

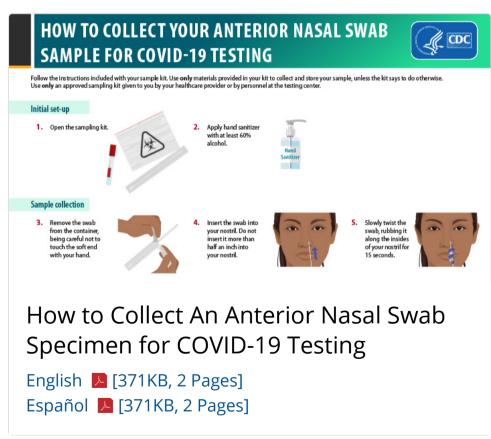
How to use results of viral tests

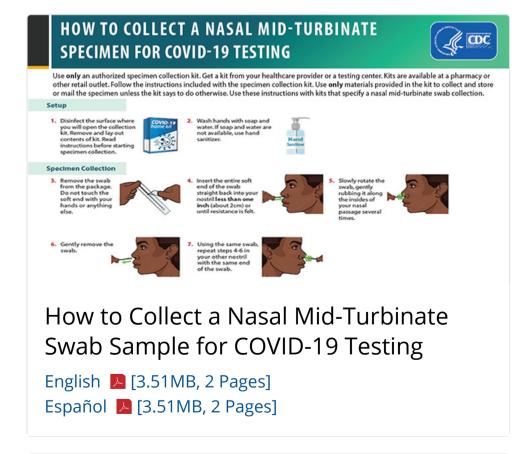
- If you test positive, know what protective steps to take to prevent others from getting sick.
- If you test negative, you probably were not infected at the time your sample was collected. The test result only means that you did not have COVID-19 at the time of testing. Continue to take steps to protect yourself.

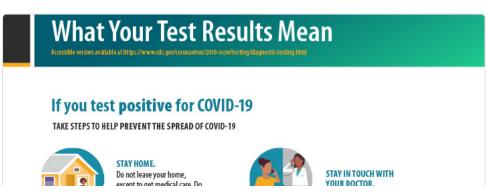


Find out what steps you can take to prevent the spread of COVID-19

Print Resources















What Your Test Results Mean

English 📙 [216kb, 1 page] Español 🔼 [208kb, 1 page] especially people who are at higher risk for getting very sick from COVID-19, such as older adults and people with other medical conditions.



Cough

shortness of breath, or other Remember, symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure

to COVID-19 and can include: Fever or chills New loss of taste or smell

sore of breath as . Sore throat

symptoms of COVID-19.

• If you have been in contact with someone with COVID-19, stay home and away from others for 14

3 key steps to take while waiting for your COVID-19 test results

English 🔼 [229KB, 2 Pages] Español 🔼 [232KB, 2 Pages]

Last Updated Oct. 27, 2021